

Green Wednesday: December 2009.

Green Wednesday: "Food Inc." Post-movie discussion and follow-up action you can take.

After the movie, a number of questions were raised:

1. What's new in labelling GMO's in Canada?
2. What is the situation in Canada with respect to industrial food production (As compared to the US stance of the movie)?
3. New legislation means that Canada is closing many local abattoirs, meat-processing plants and dairies. What can we do about this to save fresh, locally raised organic meats from being a thing of the past?
4. What is the biggest regulatory challenge for local, small-scale farmers?
5. What is the biggest marketing challenge for local, small-scale farmers?
6. How do humans metabolise glyphosate (the active ingredient in RoundUp®)?

Some thoughts and suggestions were made by a number of farmers in the audience, and one thing we can all do is write to local liberal MLA's about the new meat legislation, as suggested by residents of the North Okanagan and the Food Action Group:

LOCAL FOOD SYSTEM SUPPORTERS:

The NDP recently presented a Bill M 205 - 2009 FOOD SAFETY AMENDMENT (FARM GATES SALES) ACT, which, if passed, would have allowed for the sale of locally produced meat at the farm gate, by exempting farm gate sellers from the licensing requirements of the Meat Inspection Reglⁿ.
http://www.leg.bc.ca/39th1st/1st_read/m205-1.htm

Unfortunately, this bill, as presented, is unlikely to be debated in the legislature since it was brought forward just before the session ended. But even without the debate, this bill has had an impact. There is the very real possibility that the Liberals will bring forward their own amendments to the Meat Inspection Regulation in the next session (February).

But it will only happen if *Liberal MLA's hear from their constituents, loud and clear*, demanding changes to the regulation. Our goal is to have each MLA receive at least 25-50 emails.

We encourage you to send the following email to your MLA and cc the Minister of Agriculture, Steve Thomson, and the Minister of Healthy Living and Sport, Ida Chong and the opposition agriculture critic (Lana.Popham.MLA@leg.bc.ca):

Dear Honourable _____

I fully support an amendment to the Meat Inspection Regulation exempting farm gate sellers from current licensing requirements.

At the very least, the amendment should modify the level of inspection so as to keep small scale processing and production financially viable.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,